

### Book Review

ARNETT, R. H., JR. 1970. *Entomological Information Storage and Retrieval*. The Bio-Rand Foundation, Inc., Baltimore. xii + 210 pp., 1 plate, 10 text Fig., c. 237 refs. \$7.95.

This interesting little book is a guide to sources of entomological information, and an introduction to current information storage and retrieval theories, problems, and accomplishments as they relate to entomology. The book is intended not only as peripheral reading material, but as a student text. Accordingly, each chapter except the first contains suggested assignments, optional assignments, and a series of review questions. The writing is clear, the printing quality is good, and the illustrations are pertinent and well reproduced.

Arnett's book has a rather complex organization, with 11 text chapters, a glossary, four appendices, and subject and author indices, in addition to preface, postface, and colophon. Chapter one contains introductory observations, chapters two through eight deal with original information, and the closing three chapters deal with secondary information. Chapter two is of particular importance, since it concerns information storage and retrieval theory, the main subject of the book. In chapters three, four, and five Arnett discusses stored information, and original documents and their preparation for storage. Chapter six concerns the preparation of these documents for information retrieval. The remaining five chapters, which are more general and to some extent superficial, concern search resources, abstracts and indices, synthetic literature, popular literature, and societies, institutions, and personnel. The four appendices are: a bibliography of basic types of entomological literature; a selected list of commercial publishers and dealers in this literature; a list of entomological equipment and supply companies; and a list of major North American entomological libraries.

The arrangement of the references, or bibliography, is unfortunate. This bibliography contains 237 entries, at least one being a repetition. As a key to various types of literature, its organization by chapter and subject headings is quite suitable. Perhaps, though, the many additional text references to serials, and to other works such as the *Zoological Record*, should be included in it. As a key to references cited, however, this bibliography leaves much to be desired. Some citations repeated in two or more text chapters are not listed accordingly in the bibliography, and thus are not readily located (retrieved?). For example, there is in chapter four a reference to the Conference of Biological Editors, but this is listed in the bibliography under the heading of chapter five. I suggest that, if a second edition of this book is published, there should be a separate section for references cited.

Several acronyms used repeatedly in the text add to the complexity of the book, and any reader unfamiliar with these acronyms should turn first to the glossary and learn their various meanings. The information boxes used in numerous places are useful to summarize main points and to supply ancillary information, but some seem to me to detract from the book. I wonder, for instance, if the list of purposes of publication on page 66 is really needed; if this list is to be included, then I think each of its elements needs further discussion.

These criticisms are minor, but relate to the information storage and retrieval features of the book itself!

I strongly recommend that student entomologists, in particular, acquire and use this book as a guide. Many will find that the last several chapters will help reduce the time required for, and increase the efficiency of, any literature searches they may need to do. Regrettably, the book is somewhat regional in scope, and as a guide will be of limited use outside of North America.